



# DELAWARE VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

INSIDE

Ed MacFarland  
Hosta Beauties  
Watch Your Step

Volume 33, No. 1

[www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org)

Spring 2024

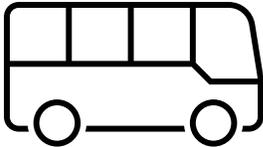


Spring

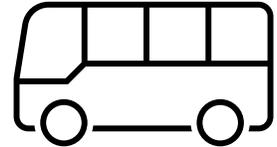


May 4

## BUS TRIP



## HOSTA HIDEAWAY



95 Sequoia Court, York Springs, Pennsylvania 17372

717-253-4830

The Hosta Hideaway, is a wonderful hosta nursery near York, PA. They have lovely hosta display gardens and a wide variety of hostas. Many of their hostas are unusual varieties from European hybridizers. Also, the owner's son has a popular line of fine metalwork available for use in the garden.

Bring a box lunch and time permitting, we'll stop at another fine garden center in the Lancaster area. We'll be taking two large vans. There is room for 6 more members if they missed the sign up deadline. The cost is \$20 per person, to be paid in advance to our treasurer Stephen Fugate. We meet in the park-and-ride at the intersection of Rt. 202 and Hwy 30 at 9 am and return by 5 pm. We will supply beverages and snacks for the ride there and back. Still looking for one more driver. If you are interested in driving contact Dan Romenesko. [danielromenesko@gmail.com](mailto:danielromenesko@gmail.com) or text to 302-345-5601.

**The following is from the Hosta Hideaway website:** "Welcome to The Hosta Hideaway Nursery and Gardens of York Springs, Pennsylvania where our goal is to offer a large selection of quality Hostas at reasonable prices. We currently have approximately 400 varieties of hosta for sale and we also offer an expanded grouping of complimentary shade plants. Additionally, we have statuary and other decorative items to add interest to your gardens. Coming to the Hosta Hideaway is a unique experience where our customers can view garden displays of mature hostas to assist in visualizing hostas in their own garden spaces."

### **Directions to the Park-And-Ride Enter the Park-and-Ride from Business 30.**

**From Rt202 Northbound.** Exit to Boot Road. Turn left. In about 0.5 mi. turn right on Phoenixville Pike. Follow Phoenixville Pike to Bus30. (note: there is a jog at King Rd). Turn left on Bus30. Keep right. In about 1000 ft the park-and-ride will be on your right.

**From Hwy30 Eastbound.** At the Rt202 intersection exit left at the fork (toward Frazer) to Bus30. Turn right. The park-and-ride is on you left immediately after passing Rt202.

**From Rt202 Westbound.** Keep right at the fork to exit to Hwy30, then immediately keep left to exit to Bus30. At Bus30 turn left. The park-and-ride is on your left immediately after passing Rt202.

**From Bus30 Westbound.** The park-and-ride is on your right immediately before Rt202.

*Just Get On the Bus!*



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## President's Letter

The pips are up! Even some foliage is up as of this writing on March 27. Of course, I'm referring to our beloved hosta plants. There's an excellent article about newly emerged hostas within this newsletter. It can be difficult to see them initially, so avoid stepping on them or else!

After our excellent soup extravaganza and panel discussion in February, I'm hoping to use some of the recommendations given there. One is to reduce the slug population with the ammonia and water which I have begun. Also, from that discussion, I plan to cover the hostas with large pots when mulching is done to keep the mulch away from the hosta crowns. This practice discourages the dreaded crown rot disease, Southern Blight, which occurs later in the heat of summer and is difficult to control.

We had such sad news this week regarding the loss of two of our members, Charlie Seaver and Ed MacFarland. I recall Charlie's last presentation to our group. He was so very animated and entertaining. I'll also remember him whenever I see his and his mother Mildred's, hybrids in our gardens. They both had a good eye for hostas and new hybrids. Some of my faves of Charlie's hybrids are 'Deep Blue Sea' and 'My Fine Feathered Friend'. A fave of Mildred's is the massive 'Blue Umbrellas'. Both of the Seavers live on in our memories and in our gardens.

While Ed MacFarland dedicated his time to many plant societies (at least five that I'm aware of), he frequently volunteered at the National Hosta Display Gardens in Barnes Arboretum. Most recently, he served as our DVHS Program Chair and Auctioneer. He was very outgoing and loved to tell stories of his service in the military. I have fond memories of Ed and his wife Linda at the 45th anniversary banquet for DVHS, and at the dedication for Warren Pollock at the Barnes Arboretum last October. While working with him at the PHS for the Flower Show, I recall Ed speaking frequently about some of his favorite plants, herbs and roses. He will be missed by many.

We look forward to our day trip to Hosta Hideaway on May 4. Look for written directions in this issue to our meeting place, a Park and Ride Lot near the Sheraton Great Valley Hotel. The week of the trip, an e-mail reminder will also contain a map of this location. While drinks and snacks will be provided, we encourage you to bring a bag lunch and a favorite snack to share.

Watch your email for pop-up work parties at the Hosta Display Garden of the Barnes Arboretum. It will be fun to see the newly planted area near the bench and plaque, both of which were installed last fall. As with all our gardens, there is still work to be done. We hope you can participate and enjoy the opportunity to see and help improve this garden.

We look forward to seeing you at our trip to Hosta Hideaway and at the upcoming garden tours, and at the National Hosta Convention in Marlborough, MA, June 19-22.

*Marilyn*

## Ed MacFarland Wins PHS Award

We have been so lucky to have Ed as a member for many years. He has served DVHS in many capacities - recently as Vice President for Programming. Unfortunately, Ed passed away on March 19.

*The following is reprinted with permission from the Philadelphia Horticultural Society Newsletter. Authored by Melissa O'Brien, PHS.*

Edwin MacFarland likes to say that he's "always had his hands in the dirt." The retired funeral director chuckles at his joke, but he's also serious about the time he spends with plants and gardens. In addition to tending the beds and containers around his home in Glenside, Pennsylvania, he is an active member of several plant societies and a regular volunteer at the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show, Meadowbrook Farm, and Pop Up Gardens. For his many years of helping others share in the benefits of gardening, MacFarland was presented in November 2023 with the PHS Medal of Achievement.

"I find gardening therapeutic. It's calming," the 74-year-old says.

"The work of a funeral director can be stressful. Sometimes you just want to cry with the people who come to you. My garden was always the best place for me to let go of all that."

### FAMILY MATTERS

MacFarland first found joy in the garden as a boy growing up in the Torresdale section of Philadelphia. His father had an extensive backyard vegetable garden. MacFarland's maternal grandparents, immigrants from Germany and Switzerland, lived next door, and he has fond memories of the berries, asparagus, and apples they grew. His paternal grandfather also lived nearby and raised onions, peas, and carrots, MacFarland recalls.

One summer while MacFarland was in high school, he spent time working on his uncle's farm in Switzerland, and he later served two tours of duty during the war in Vietnam. Those experiences shaped his life. "You see a lot and learn a lot when you go away from your home," he says. He went to college and studied marine biology but ultimately put his science background to use in a career managing a funeral home.

MacFarland had regularly attended the Philadelphia Flower Show as a child, and he continued as an adult. "In 1980, when the show was still in the old Philadelphia Civic Center, I found out that if I volunteered to help, I could get a free ticket," MacFarland says. "Sign me up!"

His first assignment was in the show's merchandise shop, but soon his knowledge of plants landed him in the PHS horticulture information booth. "In those days, we had a table, a few pencils, paper, and one reference book," he recalls. He has worked in the booth at nearly every Flower

Show since. "It's very rewarding. Many people come to you feeling frustrated. They have a plant that's not doing well, and they need advice on caring for it. I get a lot of satisfaction out of helping people."

### SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

MacFarland's home garden includes both edible and ornamental plants. "A friend from church gave me garlic bulbs that I have planted," he says. "I have four fig trees growing in pots. In late fall, I lay them over and cover them with oak leaves, which hold their loft better than other kinds of leaves. I learned that from my grandmother." He has several varieties of roses, which are favorites of his wife, Linda, who cuts and brings them into the house. In his small greenhouse, he raises begonias, and the couple care for a mix of African violets growing on an extended windowsill in their kitchen.

As MacFarland grew older and gained free time, he joined the Tamanend Park Herb Gardening Club (based in Southampton, Pennsylvania). He is now the club's president. "We have plant sales and plant swaps every year. That's another chance to help people to be successful in their gardens," he says. "This year we sponsored two scholarships to Delaware Valley University," which offers degrees in horticulture, landscape design, and environmental science.

MacFarland is also a member of the Delaware Valley chapter of the American Begonia Society, and he's become a judge for regional hosta organizations. "I really love plant competitions," he says.

The next Flower Show will be March 2 to 10, 2024, and you can be sure MacFarland will be there. The theme, United by Flowers, echoes his feelings. "The family of volunteers is big and full of friendly people," he says. "It's like a reunion when we see each other at the show."



Ed MacFarland loves caring for his plants and helping other gardeners with theirs..

# HOSTA BEAUTIES

Kathy Miller



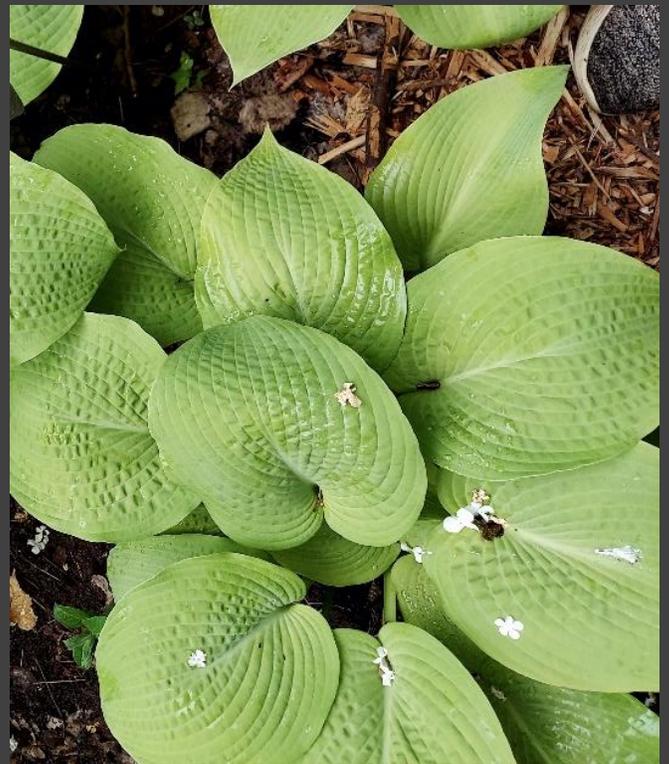
'Spartacus'. Large with lots of substance. A sport of 'Sea Gulf Stream'. Registered by Hans Hansen in 2007. I had to remove my plant because it smelled so bad. My friends all joked it was because it had just come back from fighting in the arena, but I found out later it had a bacterial infection.



'Bud Is Wiser'. Small to medium and perky. Originated by Bud Martin but not registered. Supposedly a white centered sport of 'Blue Mammoth', but obviously not due to its size. Some suggest a sport of 'Christmas Tree', but that doesn't seem right either. Oh well, let's just sit back and have another beer.



'Dancing Queen'. ABBA would be proud of this beautiful medium large plant, which has given rise to many other popular sports and seedlings. Registered by Kent Terpening and Altara Sheer in 2005.



'Rosedale Golden Goose'. Registered by Jerry Hadrava in 1999. An oldie but goodie. Eventually becomes completely dimpled. Sun tolerant. Not sure you'll get any eggs, but maybe that is what the leaves are supposed to represent.

# HOSTA BEAUTIES

Kathy Miller



'Blueberry Muffin' is an unregistered seedling from Bill Meyer. Why he registers some of his hostas but not others is not known. This one certainly is outstanding. A "must" for any garden. Medium to large with wonderful substance.



'Dab a Green', registered by Mark Zillis in 2006, is a sport of 'Abba Dabba Do'. Tony Avent declined to register 'Abba Dabba Do', which, in turn, is a sport of 'SunPower'. It's amazing how hostas go in and out of fashion. Just a few years ago 'Abba Dabba Do' was THE hosta to have.



Instagram followers of "thepaintedleafhostagarden" will recognize Lonna Engle's beautiful photo of 'Love Story'.

Eric Segal would not be pleased that "you have to say you're sorry" when this one is missing from your garden!

Registered by Hans Hansen and Walters Gardens in 2020, 'Love Story' is a hybrid from 'Niagara Falls streaked' x 'Viking Ship'. As the season progresses, the center of the leaf gradually fades so that the gold area becomes two-toned. See the Hosta Library for additional pictures of this spectacular hosta.

Lonna posts almost every day from Williamsport PA. In addition to being kind and welcoming, she is a wonderful photographer. She told me that her garden is always open for tours. Anyone else ready for a to drive to Williamsport?

## 6 Watch Where You Step

Reprinted from the February 22 issue, of *Shady Notes the St. Louis Hosta Society Newsletter*. Author unknown.

It's early spring and our hostas are still sound asleep. It has been a warm fall and winter. The growing season might only be 4-6 weeks away. Soon we hostaholics will commence our annual "hosta dance". Each afternoon we will skip outside and dance about our garden straining to catch sight of the first pips to poke through the ground.

As the temperatures warm and the days grow longer, the dormant buds of the hostas begin to swell and break through the soil. Those little pointy things that look like bullets are called pips or eyes. Each pip is comprised of tightly wrapped sets of three or four leaves encased in a sheath. The sheath protects the tender leaves until the pip has pushed through the ground and the leaves are ready to unfold. Some pips are pencil thin, others thick and fat.

Young and small hostas may only have one or two eyes and so are hard to see. The size varies depending on genetics, age, ultimate plant size and growing conditions. Some are green, others a shade of purple. If covered by thick mulch or leaves, they may even be white.

Genetics has a lot to do with which hostas break ground first. Some early risers are *H. montana* 'Aureomarginata', *H. plantaginea* and most fragrant flowered cultivars, *H. lancifolia*, *H. 'Sagae'*, *H. 'Wolverine'* and *H. 'Sum and Substance'* and its sports and seedlings. Be prepared to protect these varieties if a late frost is forecast.

Location also affects emergence. Hostas sheltered from the warming rays of the sun will be slower to emerge. Hostas in pots tend to erupt earlier than those planted in the ground.

At first, the pips will be right at the soil line or just below that thin decaying layer of mulch. Be careful! Accidentally stepping on an emerging hosta pip can have dire consequences. Bending or crushing the growing tip (top right) can tear the unfurled leaves before they even have a chance to unfold and expand, resulting in tattered leaves (bottom right).

That beautiful hosta that you have been waiting for all winter will spend the rest of the season sporting damaged leaves. There are so many things, such as hail and falling tree debris that can't be prevented. But stepped-on damage isn't one of them. If the anticipation is just too much and you must dance around in your hosta beds, step very, very carefully.



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### Another Sad Announcement

Just as this newsletter was going to print, word came of the death of Charlie Seaver.

Charlie was a pillar of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society. In the next issue we will review his contributions to the society and present some of the lovely hostas he developed and brought into the trade. I invite you to e-mail me (see page 2) with memories of Charlie. Photos too, please.

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The American Hosta Society

[www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org)

Check out the benefits of AHS membership. Join other hosta lovers from around the world.

# Springtime Garden Preparation

Cheryl Wardle

As the poet, Alexander Pope, once said, “Hope springs eternal” as we turn our thoughts and eyes towards spring. I know I am not alone in the anticipation and joy that comes from being in the garden once again after winter has been at its nadir.

At our February meeting, Missy Kashey whetted our eagerness to get back to gardening. She presented some helpful tips to tackle cleanup and to thoroughly prepare our hosta beds in these last weeks of winter. As we look forward to the splendor and showiness of all things Spring, these helpful tips will ensure a successful growing season well into fall.

As temperatures begin to climb and we start to see sprouts emerging from the soil, the first thing to be tackled in the garden is to take soil samples to send to Penn State for a soil fertility test.

<https://agsci.psu.edu/aas/soil-testing/fertility/soil-fertility-submission-forms>

Penn State will return a final soil report, which includes a chemical analysis of the tested soil along with lime and fertilizer recommendations for your garden. In addition to fertilizing to wake up and feed emerging plants, she suggested a pre-emergent to stop unwanted weed seeds from developing.

Next, Missy explained how to keep deer from feasting on our beloved and cared for plants by showing us how she has created sachets of blood meal wrapped in panty hose attached to wooden stakes. She suggested that the repellent stakes be placed every three or four feet around the perimeter to keep the deer from entering the garden. Two other recommended methods to keep deer from dining on plants is to spread Milorganite® or spray Deer Out® around the planting area.

Barbara Tiffany added that using a solution of ammonia and water (1:10 ratio ) be applied to hosta pips in order to keep hungry slugs away. Lastly, Missy reminded us that ornamental garden art should be cleaned from its winter storage and spruced up by spraying a fresh coat of paint or polyurethane.

It is very tempting to bypass these somewhat mundane tasks as we say goodbye to the bleak days of winter and cast our eyes on the glorious time that is spring. Many of us are eager to leap head-first into planting; however, taking these essential first steps will ensure a long lasting and beautiful splendor for everyone to enjoy all season long.

*A big “Thank You” to Cheryl for reporting on the discussion that was held at the February meeting. Many of us were unable to attend. We appreciate getting all this information.*

*As you recall, Cheryl triumphed in The Big Leaf contest last summer, so she definitely knows how to grow beautiful hostas.*

## Step Right Up

We can always use your help!

**AUCTIONS**

**Raffles**

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Hostatality**

or in some other capacity

Please contact any board member.

(We’re listed on page 2)

**DVHS MEMBERSHIP DUES.** Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 24, you owe DVHS dues for 2024. The dues pay for the publication of this newsletter and maintenance of the website, as well as for other activities. Note that the return address is not the same as in the past. Stephen, who is our Treasurer, will forward your form to Debby, who is our Membership Chair.

----- Cut off and mail in. -----

### Delaware Valley Hosta Society Membership and Renewal Form

Dues (household membership) are \$10 per year.

Mail to: Stephen Fugate, DVHS Treasurer  
1411 Deer Meadow Lane  
Garnet Valley, PA 19060

Please use this form also to update your records for address and e-mail, or to offer your garden for a potential meeting or tour. Thanks!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider opening your garden for a members’  
tour? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you in the nursery trade? \_\_\_\_\_

# Calendar of Events 2024 [www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org)

## Please watch our website for more!

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Saturday, February 17, 2024. Hosta Soup Meeting.  
Easttown Public Library. Berwyn, PA.

May, 4, 2024. Bus Trip to Hosta Hideaway. York  
Springs, PA

Saturday, June 1, 2024. Tally-Crest: The  
Romenesko Garden. Potluck and Auction.  
Greenhill Plant pick-Up. Wilmington, DE

June 19-22, 2024. AHS National Convention.  
Marlborough, MA.

Saturday, June 29, 2024. Garden Tour. Debby Bryan  
and Andy Purbrick. Big Leaf Contest. Auction.  
West Chester, PA

Saturday, October 19, 2024. Fall Meeting. Tredyffrin  
Library. Speaker Don Rawson.

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